

SWAP NEWS

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM SUMMARY

Montana Source Water Assessment Program Update by DEQ

Welcome to the first edition of the **SWAP NEWS**. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep interested folks up to date on the status of the Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) development and implementation. This first edition starts out with a description of the program as mandated by congress and describes some of the required components. It may be a rehash of information for many of you but will help ensure that everyone is aware of the basics. We've also included information about the advisory council and their role in program development plus a few paragraphs about other activities of the Source Water Protection section at DEQ. Finally, we've provided names, addresses, and phone numbers to let you know how you can reach us. The **SWAP NEWS** will be distributed quarterly over the next year and once or twice a year thereafter. If you wish to be taken off the mailing list, please contact Joe Meek or Russ Levens at DEQ.

Montana is required, under provisions of the 1996 amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, to carry out a Source Water Assessment Program. The program is being developed using public participation,

including input from public water systems (PWSs).

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identification of the

source(s) of water used by PWSs.

Source water protection areas are delineated for ground water and surface water sources. This is a technical process that considers characteristics of

the aquifer or watershed and the PWS withdrawal in order to identify the land area that contributes recharge to the hydrologic or hydrogeologic system above or upgradient from the PWS well or intake structure.

2. Identification and Inventory of Potential Contaminant Sources

Potential contaminant sources within the source water protection area are identified. Regulated contaminants of concern in Montana include nitrate,

Source water assessments must be made available to the public. A combination of means will be utilized including consumer confidence reports, SWAP Internet site, and others.

SWAP HIGHLIGHTS:

- The program is applicable to all public water systems and types of water sources.
- The program will prescribe methods and criteria for delineating source water protection areas and assessing the susceptibility of public water systems to contamination.
- The program is being developed by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality with input from an advisory council and the public.
- The program is subject to EPA review and approval prior to implementation. The deadline for submittal of the Montana program to EPA is 02/05/99.
- Delineations and assessments will be provided to each PWS by or through the Montana DEQ using dollars set aside by Congress for

microbial contaminants, and certain fuels, solvents, herbicides, pesticides, and metals. Potential sources of these types of contaminants include septic systems, animal feeding operations, underground storage tanks, floor drains and sumps, and certain land use activities.

3. Assessment of the Susceptibility of the PWS to those identified potential contaminant sources.

A susceptibility assessment consists of evaluating the physical and chemical this purpose.

- Delineation and assessments will be compiled into a map and text report for each PWS.
- Assistance is available to PWSs to help them utilize the delineation and assessment report to develop local source water protection plans.

Public Meetings:

The draft Montana

November 12	Kalispell
November 16	Billings
November 17	Wolf Point
November 18	Great Falls
time & locations to be announced-watch the Internet site for details	

Source Water Assessment Program document will be available for review.

You can read or download the

properties of an aquifer or stream along with attributes of identified potential contaminant sources. A determination of relative susceptibility will be made for each identified potential contaminant source within the source water protection area.

4. Make the results of the delineation and assessment available to the public.

KEY SWAP ISSUES

document via the SWAP Internet site after October 28 1998 at

“<http://water.montana.edu/SWP/assessment>” or you can request a paper copy by contacting Joe or Russ at DEQ (see contact list at end of newsletter).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Public meetings will be held across the state during the week of November 9 and November 16. The purpose of these meetings is to solicit public comment on the draft Montana Source Water Assessment Program. Comments may also be phoned, mailed, or E-mailed directly to Joe Meek or Russ Levens at DEQ (see contact list at end of newsletter).

You can comment using the “discussion group” accessible at the Source Water Protection internet site (<http://water.montana.edu/SWP>).

Members of the advisory council may also be contacted directly.

You can also view or download from the Internet EPA's guidance to states that describes how a state program should be developed by going to: <http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/SWP.swppg.html>

The Environmental Protection Agency

provided a list of key issues to guide development of state source water assessment programs. In general, the key issues are public participation, overall approach, methodology, program implementation, and public notification. Selected key issues are included below.

Key issues:

- What should DEQ do to insure ongoing public participation in implementing assessments once the state's SWAP is approved

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Section 1428 (b) of the SDWA requires that, "to the maximum extent possible, each state shall establish procedures, including but not limited to the establishment of technical and citizens advisory committees, to encourage the public to participate in developing the source water assessment program. Such procedures shall include notice and opportunity for public hearing on the state program before it is submitted to the Administrator." The Source Water Assessment Program Advisory Council (SWAPAC) was formed as partial satisfaction of this requirement. The purpose of SWAPAC is to:

- Provide a forum to ensure citizen viewpoints are considered concerning the desirability and appropriateness of the state's SWAP approach.
- Ensure the technical feasibility and effectiveness of the state's SWAP approach in an efficient and

- How should the state's assessment program lead to state watershed approaches and link to wellhead and other protection programs?
- How and when should DEQ make source water assessments public?
- Contaminants of concern identified by DEQ are: nitrate, microbial organisms, and selected solvents, herbicides, pesticides, and metals. Are there other contaminants that should be cost-effective manner.
- Develop and describe the mechanism by which the results of the source water assessments will be made available to the public.
- Work with their constituents as the SWAPS is implemented and advise the state how to use the assessments in implementing prevention programs.

DEQ set up one committee with overall responsibility to give advice on key stages in the planning process. A technical subcommittee was formed to play a more active role in designing the program.

The goal of the state in setting up the SWAPAC was to provide the most effective opportunity to obtain public input. Membership on the council was solicited from representatives of public interest groups, public health groups, vulnerable population groups, business groups, local governments, tribes, land conservation groups, drinking water suppliers of various type and sizes, wastewater treatment plant operators, farmers, and developers.

DEQ formed SWAPAC using an existing advisory committee, the Water Pollution Control Advisory Council (WPCAC), as the core membership. WPCAC functions

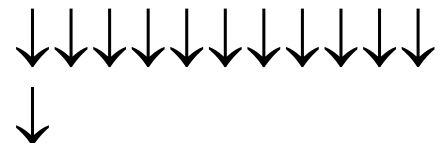
added?

- Should Montana consider instituting a mandatory program if implementation goals are not met?

pursuant to the Montana Water Quality Act. Combining the two councils provides consistency among DEQ programs and citizens working with the agency while being more efficient with time and travel for advisory council members. SWAPAC will be in existence for 12-18 months during the planning stages of the program and will then disband.



OTHER SWAP RELATED ACTIVITIES



A source water assessment for the Havre public water system will begin in October. Work by DEQ will be supported through contracts with the Water Resource Center at Montana State University and the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) at the Montana State Library. The goal of this project is to demonstrate source water assessment methods for the Milk River, a U.S./Canadian international surface water source.

Within twelve months DEQ will accomplish the following four tasks:

3. Make the results of the source water assessment available to the public through an interactive link to the Montana Source Water Protection Internet page.

4. Provide limited support in developing a voluntary and community-based Source Water Protection Plan for Havre.

Fall 1998: Personnel from DEQ will visit Havre to meet with the PWS operator and any other local entities or watershed groups that may be interested in cooperating in the source water assessment. DEQ and personnel from NRIS will identify data needed for GIS mapping.

Winter 1999: Delineation of source water protection regions. Take second trip to Havre to validate locations of potential contaminant sources.

Spring 1999: Complete the source water susceptibility assessment.

Summer 1999: Encourage and support development of a voluntary and community-based source water protection plan for Havre. Complete to the Montana Source Water Protection Internet Site.

Project Partners

The Planning, Prevention, and

1. Develop GIS data layers from existing databases focussing on potential sources of contaminants deemed to be significant health risks.

2. Undertake a source water assessment consisting of the following components:

- Delineate source water protection areas for differential management.

- Conduct an inventory of potential contaminant sources.

Assistance Division, Pollution Prevention Bureau, Source Water Protection Section of DEQ will be responsible for completing the source water assessment and will organize and direct the efforts contracting agencies.

The Water Resource Center will develop a link to present the Havre Source Water Assessment on the Montana Source Water Protection Internet site.

The Natural Resources Information System will provide GIS data layers of potential contaminant sources and other information as needed.

The Havre Water Department will assist in identifying local interest, communicating information about project activities, and with the contaminant source inventory.

Evaluation Process to Assess Success

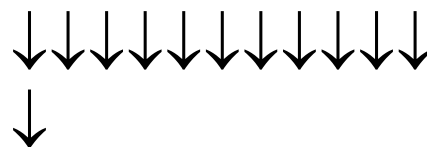
Success of this project will initially be evaluated through completion of a source water assessment of the PWS at Havre and an Internet link to provide public access to the assessment. The ultimate success of the source water assessment at Havre will be measured by its value in developing a Source Water Assessment Plan. Also, the data layers created from existing databases will have statewide coverage and can will be used in other source water

SURFACE WATER DEMOSTRATION FOR HAVRE

- Evaluate the susceptibility of the Havre PWS to potential contaminant sources.

- Present the assessment using GIS software.

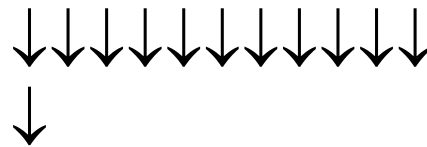
assessments.



The Source Water Protection section is participating on the Watershed Management Core team at DEQ. The mission of the team is to develop a coordination framework for watershed management activities by DEQ. The purposes are to:

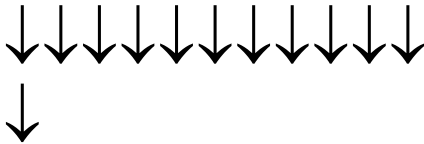
- improve communication within and outside the agency
- use limited resources more efficiently,
- restore and protect water and aquatic resources using a sound scientific basis and one that involves the affected community.

Many of those people familiar with the agency and water issues in Montana will agree that this is a step in the right direction which may provide a sound basis for future resource management decisions.



The 1999 training schedule for PWS operators is now being finalized. The Source Water Protection section will be providing training opportunities

relating to SWP at several locations around the state. Typical sessions range from 2 hours to all day and cover topics such as Montana ground water, well construction, delineation and assessments, and emergency planning for PWSs.



The Montana Water Plan is a state effort, lead by DNRC, to set out a progressive program for the conservation, development, and utilization of the state's water resources. The Ground Water section of this plan has undergone significant public and intra/inter-agency review in the past several months brought about by the reorganization of the state resource agencies. The document is available for review via the Internet at the DNRC site: <http://>

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